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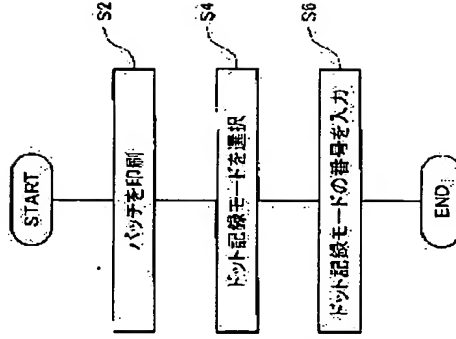
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(54) SELECTION OF SUBSCAN FEED BASED ON PRINTING RESULTS OF TEST PATCH

(57)Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To upgrade the quality of a printed image in the printing process to form dots on a printing medium by executing a main scan and a subscan operation.

SOLUTION: First, in the step S2, a user prints a test patch on a printing paper in respectively different dot recording modes. Each of the dot recording modes shows a difference in the feed of a printing head for the subscan to be performed between the main scans, although the main scan procedures are the same as specified, with regard to each dot recording mode. Each test patch is printed using three different color inks, that is, pale-color cyan, pale-color magenta and yellow. In the step S4, the user selects the test patch which appears to be most uniform among the other test patches. After that, the user enters a number attached to the selected test patch to the computer in the step S6. Thus it is possible to perform the high-quality printing by selecting a dot recording mode through actually printing the test patch in each of the dot recording modes.



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CLAIMS

[Claim (a)]

[Claim 1] Performing horizontal scanning to which at least one side of said nozzle group and print media is moved using the airline printer equipped with the nozzle group which carries out the regurgitation of the ink droplet. Vertical scanning which moves at least one side of said nozzle group and said print media in the direction at which said horizontal scanning is crossed in the intervals of said horizontal scanning is performed. It is the approach of determining the recording mode of a dot at the time of printing by making an ink droplet reaching the target and forming a dot on said print media. Said dot record approach (a) by two or more dot recording modes from which the contents of said vertical scanning performed in the intervals of said horizontal scanning differ mutually. The dot recording-mode decision approach including the process which forms a test patch on said print media, respectively, and the process which determines a dot recording mode by choosing one test patch from the (b) aforementioned test patches.

[Claim 2] Performing horizontal scanning to which at least one side of said nozzle group and print media is moved using the airline printer equipped with the nozzle group which carries out the regurgitation of the ink droplet. Vertical scanning which moves at least one side of said nozzle group and said print media in the direction at which said horizontal scanning is crossed in the intervals of said horizontal scanning is performed. It is the approach of determining the recording mode of a dot at the time of printing by making an ink droplet reaching the target and forming a dot on said print media. Said printing is printing which records two or more pixels contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine by said horizontal scanning from which the contents of said record approach (a) by two or more dot recording modes from which the contents of said vertical scanning which the count of said horizontal scanning taken to record all the pixels contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine is mutually equal, and performs in the intervals of said horizontal scanning differ mutually. The dot recording-mode decision approach including the process which forms a test patch on said print media, respectively, and the process which determines a dot recording mode by choosing one test patch from the (b) aforementioned test patches.

[Claim 3] It is the dot recording-mode decision approach which is a dot recording mode that the combination of the nozzle on which it is the dot recording-mode decision approach according to claim 2, and two or more pixels by which said two or more dot recording modes continue towards said vertical scanning are recorded, respectively differs mutually.

[Claim 4] Said process (a) is the dot recording-mode decision approach including the process which it is the dot recording-mode decision approach according to claim 1 or 2, and it is two or more dot recording modes which repeat said vertical scanning of one kind of feed per revolution, and perform, and said feeds per revolution are two or more mutually different dot recording modes, respectively, and forms a test patch on said print media, respectively.

[Claim 5] Two or more dot recording modes from which it is the dot recording-mode decision approach according to claim 4, and said feed per revolution differs mutually are the dot recording-mode decision approaches that said feed per revolution is an almost equal dot recording mode.

[Claim 6] It is the dot recording-mode decision approach according to claim 1 or 2. Said process

(a) The execution sequence of vertical scanning of two or more kinds of said feeds per revolution which are two or more dot recording modes which repeat and perform unit vertical scanning including said vertical scanning of two or more kinds of feeds per revolution, and said unit vertical scanning contains. The dot recording-mode decision approach which includes the process which forms a test patch on said print media, respectively by said two or more dot recording modes from which at least two or more feeds per revolution of a class and one side of ** differ.

[Claim 7] Two or more dot recording modes which are the dot recording-mode decision approaches according to claim 6, and repeat and perform said unit vertical scanning are the dot recording-mode decision approaches that the average of the feed per revolution of said vertical scanning which said unit vertical scanning includes is an almost equal dot recording mode.

[Claim 8] It is the dot recording-mode decision approach including the process which is the dot recording-mode decision approach according to claim 1 or 2, and said process (a) forms a dot in a Magenta, cyanogen, and the ink of Hierro in said each dot recording mode, respectively, and forms said test patch.

[Claim 9] The nozzle group which is the airline printer which prints by making an ink droplet breathe out from a nozzle, making it reach the target on print media, and forming a dot, and carries out the regurgitation of the ink droplet, Said nozzle group, and said print media and the horizontal-scanning mechanical component which performs horizontal scanning to which at least one side of ** is moved. The vertical-scanning mechanical component which performs vertical scanning which moves at least one side of said nozzle group, and said print media and ** in the direction of said horizontal scanning, and the direction at which it crosses. It has the input section which receives the data input from the outside, and the control section which performs control of said each part. Said control section By two or more dot recording modes from which the contents of said vertical scanning performed in the intervals of said horizontal scanning differ mutually. The test patch formation section which forms a test patch on said print media, respectively. An airline printer equipped with the dot recording-mode storage section which memorizes the dot recording-mode select data which can specify the dot recording mode chosen from said two or more dot recording modes based on said test patch, and which is data and was inputted from said input section.

[Claim 10] The nozzle group which is the airline printer which prints by making an ink droplet breathe out from a nozzle, making it reach the target on print media, and forming a dot, and carries out the regurgitation of the ink droplet, Said nozzle group, and said print media and the horizontal-scanning mechanical component which performs horizontal scanning to which at least one side of ** is moved. The vertical-scanning mechanical component which performs vertical scanning which moves at least one side of said nozzle group, and said print media and ** in the direction of said horizontal scanning, and the direction at which it crosses. It has the input section which receives the data input from the outside, and the control section which performs control of said each part. Said control section By two or more dot recording modes from which the contents of said vertical scanning which the count of said horizontal scanning taken to record all the pixels contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine is mutually equal, and performs in the intervals of said horizontal scanning differ mutually. The test patch formation section which forms a test patch on said print media, respectively. An airline printer equipped with the dot recording-mode storage section which memorizes the dot recording-mode select data which can specify the dot recording mode chosen from said two or more dot recording modes based on said test patch, and which is data and was inputted from said input section.

[Claim 11] It is the airline printer which forms said test patch by the dot recording mode from which the combination of the nozzle on which it is an airline printer according to claim 10, and two or more pixels by which said test patch formation section continues towards said vertical scanning are recorded, respectively differs mutually.

[Claim 12] Said test patch formation section is an airline printer with which it is an airline printer according to claim 9 or 10, and it is two or more dot recording modes which repeat said vertical scanning of one kind of feed per revolution, and perform, respectively, and said feed per revolution forms said test patch by two or more mutually different dot recording modes.

[Claim 13] It is the airline printer with which said test patch is formed by the dot recording mode with said feed per revolution are an airline printer according to claim 12, and almost equal [said test patch formation section].

[Claim 14] It is said airline printer which are two or more dot recording modes which it is an airline printer according to claim 9 or 10, and said test patch formation section repeats unit vertical scanning including said vertical scanning of two or more kinds of feeds per revolution, and perform, and said unit vertical scanning includes and which forms said test patch by the execution sequence and said two or more dot recording modes from which at least two or more feeds per revolution of a class and one side of ** differ of vertical scanning of a class two or more, [of a feed per revolution]

[Claim 15] It is the airline printer with which said test patch is formed by the dot recording mode with the delivery average value of said vertical scanning which said unit vertical scanning includes are an airline printer according to claim 14, and almost equal [said test patch formation section].

[Claim 16] It is the airline printer which said test patch formation section uses said Magenta nozzle group, said cyanogen nozzle group, and said Hierro nozzle group in said each dot recording mode, and forms said each test patch by being an airline printer according to claim 9 or 10, and equipping said nozzle group with the Magenta nozzle group which carries out the regurgitation of the Magenta ink, the cyanogen nozzle group which carries out the regurgitation of the cyanogen ink, and the Hierro nozzle group which carries out the regurgitation of the Hierro ink.

[Claim 17] Performing horizontal scanning which moves at least one side of said nozzle group and print media to the computer equipped with the printing section equipped with the nozzle group which carries out the regurgitation of the ink droplet Vertical scanning which moves at least one side of said nozzle group and said print media in the direction at which said horizontal scanning is crossed in the intervals of said horizontal scanning is performed. The time of printing by making an ink droplet reach the target and forming a dot on said print media. In order to make the test patch used in order to determine the recording mode of a dot form, it is the record medium which recorded the computer program and in which computer reading is possible. Said record medium By two or more dot recording modes from which the contents of said vertical scanning performed in the intervals of said horizontal scanning differ mutually The procedure which forms a test patch on said print media, respectively, and the procedure of memorizing the dot recording-modes select data showing the dot recording mode chosen from said two or more dot recording-modes based on said test patch, The record medium which recorded the program for performing the aforementioned computer and in which computer reading is possible.

[Claim 18] Performing horizontal scanning which moves at least one side of said nozzle group and print media to the computer equipped with the printing section equipped with the nozzle group which carries out the regurgitation of the ink droplet Vertical scanning which moves at least one side of said nozzle group and said print media in the direction at which said horizontal scanning is crossed in the intervals of said horizontal scanning is performed. The time of printing by making an ink droplet reach the target and forming a dot on said print media. In order to make the test patch used in order to determine the recording mode of a dot form, it is the record medium which recorded the computer program and in which computer reading is possible. Said record medium By two or more dot recording modes from which the contents of said vertical scanning which the count of said horizontal scanning taken to record all the pixels contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine is mutually equal, and performs in the intervals of said horizontal scanning differ mutually The procedure which forms a test patch on said print media, respectively, and the procedure of memorizing the dot recording-modes select data showing the dot recording mode chosen from said two or more dot recording-modes based on said test patch, The record medium which recorded the program for performing the aforementioned computer and in which computer reading is possible.

[Claim 19] The record medium which is a record medium according to claim 17 or 18, and stores the image data for forming said test patch further.

[Translation done.]

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001] [Field of the Invention] It is related with the technique which raises the quality of a printing image in printing which performs vertical scanning in the intervals of horizontal scanning, especially about the technique which prints an image by forming a dot on print media, this invention performing horizontal scanning.

[0002] [Description of the Prior Art] In recent years, the printer of the type which carries out the regurgitation of the ink from a head has spread widely as an output unit of a computer. An ink droplet is made to breathe out from a nozzle, performing horizontal scanning, vertical scanning is performed in the intervals of horizontal scanning, and there are some printers which form a dot on print media and print an image. There were what repeats vertical scanning of a fixed feed per revolution, and a thing which repeats and performs combination of vertical scanning from which a feed per revolution differs in such a printer. However, as for the setup of the feed per revolution of vertical scanning, in any case, it was fixed to one.

[0003]

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Invention] In printing which performs horizontal scanning and vertical scanning and forms a dot on print media, the quality of a printing result may worsen depending on the quality of the manufacture error of a printer, or a print sheet.

[0004] This invention is made in order to solve the above-mentioned technical problem in the conventional technique, and it aims at raising the quality of a printing image in printing which performs horizontal scanning and vertical scanning and forms a dot on print media.

[0005]

[The means for solving a technical problem, and its operation and effectiveness] In order to solve a part of above-mentioned technical problem [at least], in this invention, an ink droplet is made to breathe out from a nozzle and predetermined processing is performed in the airline printer which prints by making it reach the target on print media, and forming a dot. This airline printer is equipped with the vertical-scanning mechanical component which performs vertical scanning which moves at least one side of the nozzle group which carries out the regurgitation of the ink droplet, a nozzle group, print media and the horizontal-scanning mechanical component which performs horizontal scanning to which at least one side of ** is moved, a nozzle group, and print media and ** in the direction of horizontal scanning, and the direction at which it crosses, the input section which receives the data input from the outside, and the control section which performs control of each part.

[0006] In such an airline printer, the contents of vertical scanning performed in the intervals of horizontal scanning form a test patch on print media by two or more mutually different dot recording modes, respectively. Then, a dot recording mode is determined by choosing one test patch from test patches. The dot recording mode to which the quality of a printing result becomes high most by considering as such a mode based on an actual printing result can be chosen.

[0007] Moreover, when performing printing which records two or more pixels contained in one

horizontal-scanning Rhine by horizontal scanning from which plurality differs, it is desirable that the count of horizontal scanning taken to record all the pixels contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine forms a test patch on print media by two or more equal dot recording modes mutually, respectively. The count of horizontal scanning taken to record such a mode, then all the pixels contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine can choose a dot recording mode from two or more equal dot recording modes mutually on the basis of the right wrong of the printing result resulting from the difference between the record sequence of the pixel contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine, and the combination of the nozzle which records each pixel.

[0008] In addition, as for two or more dot recording modes, it is desirable that the combination of the nozzle on which two or more pixels which continue towards vertical scanning are recorded, respectively is a mutually different dot recording mode. A dot recording mode can be chosen from such a mode, then the dot recording mode from which the quality of a printing result differs.

[0009] In addition, in case a test patch is formed, it is two or more dot recording modes which repeat and perform vertical scanning of one kind of feed per revolution, respectively, and can consider as the mode which forms a test patch on print media, respectively by two or more dot recording modes from which a feed per revolution differs mutually. Moreover, as for two or more dot recording modes from which a feed per revolution differs mutually, it is desirable that a feed per revolution considers as an almost equal dot recording mode in that case. Even if it chooses such a mode, then which dot recording mode, it is not said a lot that a print speed changes.

[0010] Moreover, in case a test patch is formed, it is two or more dot recording modes which repeat and perform unit vertical scanning including vertical scanning of two or more kinds of feeds per revolution, and can also consider as the mode which forms a test patch on print media, respectively by two or more dot recording modes from which at least the execution sequence of vertical scanning of two or more kinds of feeds per revolution which unit vertical scanning contains, and one side of two or more kinds of feeds per revolution and ** differ. In such a case, as for two or more dot recording modes which repeat and perform unit vertical scanning, it is desirable that the average of the feed per revolution of vertical scanning which unit vertical scanning includes considers as an almost equal dot recording mode. Even if it chooses such a mode, then which dot recording mode, it is not said a lot that a print speed changes.

[0011] Moreover, in case a test patch is formed, in each dot recording mode, it is desirable to form a dot in a Magenta, cyanogen, and the ink of Hierro, respectively, and to form a test patch. The test patch which is easy to reflect the quality of the printing result in such a mode, then color printing can be formed.

[0012] In addition, this invention can be realized in various modes as shown below.

(1) The dot recording-mode decision approach, the printing approach, the printing control approach.

(2) An airline printer, a print control unit.

(3) The manufacture approach of an airline printer.

(4) The computer program for realizing above-mentioned equipment and an above-mentioned approach.

(5) The record medium which recorded the computer program for realizing above-mentioned equipment and an above-mentioned approach.

(6) The data signal embodied in the subcarrier including the computer program for realizing above-mentioned equipment and an above-mentioned approach.

[0013]

[Embodiment of the Invention] Next, the gestalt of operation of this invention is explained in order of the following based on an example.

A. outline [of an operation gestalt]: -- B. 1st example: -- configuration [of B1. equipment]: -- B-2. dot recording-mode: -- selection [of a B3. dot recording mode]: -- C. 2nd example: -- D. 3rd example: -- E. modification: [0014] A. The outline of an operation gestalt : drawing.1 is a flow

chart which shows the procedure of determining a dot recording mode. First, a user is step S2 and prints a test patch on a print sheet by dot recording mode different, respectively. Although the way of horizontal scanning of each dot recording mode is the same, the feeds per revolution

of vertical scanning performed in the intervals of each horizontal scanning differ. However, the feed per revolution of a dot recording mode with the smallest feed per revolution is 90% or more of a feed per revolution of a dot recording mode with the largest feed per revolution. Moreover, each test patch is printed using the ink of light cyanogen, a light Magenta, and three colors of Hierno. This test patch is checked by looking as a test patch of uniform gray in the state of ideal printing.

[0015] In step S4, a user chooses the test patch which is visible to the most uniform gray out of the test patch printed by each dot recording mode. Then, a user inputs into a computer the number given to the selected test patch through the user interface screen of a computer at step S6. A computer sends the number to a printer. If printing directions are received later, according to the dot recording mode corresponding to the number inputted at step S6, a printer will process an image and will perform printing. Thus, quality printing can be performed by actually printing by each dot recording mode, and choosing a dot recording mode.

[0016] B. 1st example: -- configuration [of B1. equipment]: -- drawing 2 is the outline block diagram of the printing system equipped with the ink jet printer 20 as an example of this invention. The vertical-scanning delivery device in which this printer 20 conveys a print sheet P in the direction of vertical scanning by the paper feed motor 22. The horizontal-scanning delivery device in which carriage 30 is made to reciprocate to the shaft orientations (main scanning direction) of a platen 26 by the carriage motor 24. The head drive which drives the print head unit 60 carried in carriage 30, and controls the regurgitation of ink, and dot formation. It has the control circuit 40 which manages an exchange of a signal with these paper feed motors 22, the carriage motor 24, the print head unit 60, and a control panel 32. The control circuit 40 is connected to the computer 88 through the connector 56.

[0017] The horizontal-scanning delivery device in which carriage 30 is made to reciprocate is equipped with the pulley 38 which stretches the endless driving belt 36, and the position sensor 39 which detects the home position of carriage 30 between the sliding shaft 34 which holds carriage 30 possible [sliding], and the carriage motor 24. Moreover, the vertical-scanning delivery device in which a print sheet P is conveyed is equipped with the gear train which transmits rotation of the paper feed motor 22 to a form conveyance roller (not shown) (not shown). With a form conveyance roller, a print sheet P is conveyed in a direction perpendicular to the sliding shaft 34, i.e., the direction of horizontal scanning and the direction at which it crosses.

[0018] Drawing 3 is the block diagram showing the configuration of the printer 20 centering on a control circuit 40. a control circuit -- 40 -- CPU -- 41 -- a programmable ROM (P-ROM) -- 43 -- RAM -- 44 -- an alphabetic character -- a dot matrix -- having memorized -- a character generator -- (-- CG --) -- 45 -- having had -- arithmetic -- a logic operation circuit -- ***** -- constituting -- having -- ****. This control circuit 40 is further equipped with the I/F specialized circuit 50 which carries out an interface with an external motor etc. to dedication, the head drive circuit 52 which it connects [circuit] with this I/F specialized circuit 50, and the print head unit 60 is driven [circuit], and makes ink breathe out, and the motorised circuit 54 which drives the paper feed motor 22 and the carriage motor 24. The I/F specialized circuit 50 builds in the parallel interface circuit, and can receive the printing signal PS supplied from a computer 88 through a connector 56. In addition, CPU41 functions as test patch formation section 41a mentioned later by performing the computer program stored in P-ROM43. [0019] Drawing 4 is the explanatory view showing the nozzle of two or more trains prepared in the print head 28. this printer 20 -- black (K), dark cyanogen (C), light cyanogen (LC), a dark Magenta (M), a light Magenta (LM), and Hierno -- it has the nozzle train which carries out the regurgitation of the ink of (Y), respectively. And each nozzle train is equipped with 96 nozzles. In addition, dark cyanogen and light cyanogen are cyanogen ink in which it has the almost same hue and concentration differs. The same is said of dark Magenta ink and light Magenta ink. The print head 28 is conveyed in horizontal scanning in the direction of the arrow head MS shown in drawing 4, and a print sheet P is conveyed in vertical scanning in the direction of the arrow head SS shown in drawing 4.

[0020] Drawing 5 is the block diagram showing the function part in a control circuit 40. Each

function part of a receive buffer 115, the expansion buffer 116, and a register 117 is prepared for the control circuit 40. Specifically, these function parts are realized by RAM44 and the P-ROM43 grade which are controlled by CPU41 in a control circuit 40 (refer to drawing 3). Moreover, the horizontal-scanning section 111 as a function part of the I/F specialized circuit 50, the head drive circuit 52, and the motorised circuit 54 and the vertical-scanning section 112 are shown in drawing 5.

[0021] In a control circuit 40, the I/F specialized circuit 50 memorizes to reception the printing signal PS transmitted from printer driver 88a, and once memorizes it to a receive buffer 115. And the data for an one pass are sent to the expansion buffer 116 one by one from the data memorized by the receive buffer 115. In addition, one horizontal scanning is called "pass." For example, when each horizontal-scanning Rhine is recorded by eight horizontal scanning, the data sent to the expansion buffer 116 are data for one piece at eight pixels contained in each horizontal-scanning Rhine. And the data of such dot formation information on each horizontal-scanning Rhine are sent to the expansion buffer 116 only for the part of horizontal-scanning Rhine which has a dot recorded in one-time horizontal scanning, i.e., the part of all the nozzles used in one-time horizontal scanning.

[0022] Then, the dot formation information for 1 pixel on each nozzle collects, is taken out from the dot formation information on a part for an one pass, i.e., horizontal-scanning Rhine 1 duty, of the nozzle in the expansion buffer 116 by the order in which each nozzle forms a dot, and it is sent to a register 117. In a register 117, the cut-down data is changed into serial data, and it sends to the head drive circuit 52. And the head drive circuit 52 drives a head according to the serial data, and prints an image. On the other hand, from the data for an one pass in the expansion buffer 116, the data in which how to send the data in which how to send horizontal scanning is shown, and vertical scanning is shown are taken out, and it is sent to the horizontal-scanning section 111 and the vertical-scanning section 112. And the horizontal-scanning section 111 and the vertical-scanning section 112 perform horizontal scanning of a head, and conveyance of a print sheet according to those data.

[0023] B-2, dot recording mode: Drawing 6 is the explanatory view showing how horizontal-scanning Rhine on a print sheet is recorded in the 1st dot recording mode. In drawing 6, the number of horizontal-scanning Rhine is shown in left-hand side. Moreover, the number of the pass for recording each horizontal-scanning Rhine is shown in the drawing 6 bottom. And the grid of a vertical single tier shows the print head, and the number of each nozzle shows the location of each nozzle on the print head. In drawing 6, in order to simplify explanation, only one train is shown among the nozzle trains of each color.

[0024] As shown in drawing 6, in the 1st dot recording mode, vertical scanning in the feed per revolution of 47 dots is performed once for every one horizontal scanning. "1 dot" is spacing of each horizontal-scanning Rhine about the direction of vertical scanning. Although a print sheet P is conveyed to the print head and both relative position changes in fact, in order to simplify explanation, by drawing 6, it is displaying as if the print head moved in the direction of arrow-head SS' to the print sheet P. In addition, this arrow-head SS' indicates the reverse sense to be the arrow head SS in drawing 4. Henceforth, both an arrow head SS and arrow-head SS' are used in order to show the direction of vertical scanning all over drawing. Moreover, in drawing 6, in order to simplify explanation, whenever vertical scanning is performed once, the print head is shifted and displayed on the right. In addition, on these specifications, in case record of each horizontal-scanning Rhine is explained, the "upper part" and the direction of a call and a tail edge are called a "lower part" for the direction of the front end at the time of a print sheet P being sent by the paper feed motor 22. The name under besides is in agreement with the upper and lower sides of drawing 6.

[0025] As shown in drawing 6, in the 1st dot recording mode, two nozzles pass through each horizontal-scanning Rhine top fundamentally. For example, nozzle #88 and #41 of the 70th line pass in the early order of pass. Hereafter, suppose that "#" is given to a nozzle number. Each pixel contained in horizontal-scanning Rhine through which two nozzles pass is recorded by either of two nozzles which passes through the pixel top.

[0026] On the other hand, three nozzles pass through horizontal-scanning Rhine, such as the

51st line, the 55th line, the 98th line, and the 102nd line. Nozzle #95, #48, and #1 of the 51st line and the 98th line pass in the early order of pass. And nozzle #96, #49, and #2 of the 55th line and the 102nd line pass in the early order of pass. In the 1st dot recording mode, nozzle #95 and #96 do not use it. Therefore, in the 1st dot recording mode, nozzle #95, #48, and horizontal-scanning Rhine through which #1 passes are recorded by nozzle #48 and #1. And nozzle #96, #49, and horizontal-scanning Rhine through which #2 passes are recorded by nozzle #49 and #2. [0027] In the 1st dot recording mode, the same record as the part of 51st line - the 97th line enclosed with the thick frame in drawing 6 is repeated about the direction of arrow-head SS'. For example, the 98th line is similarly recorded with the 51st line, and the 99th line is similarly recorded with the 52nd line. The magnitude of the unit part repeated about this direction of vertical scanning is 47 lines as well as 47 dots of feeds per revolution.

[0028] Drawing 7 is the explanatory view showing how horizontal-scanning Rhine on a print sheet is recorded in the 2nd dot recording mode. As shown in drawing 7, in the 2nd dot recording mode, vertical scanning in the feed per revolution of 45 dots is performed once for every one horizontal scanning. Moreover, nozzle #91-#96 are not used in the 2nd dot recording mode. [0029] As shown in drawing 7, also in the 2nd dot recording mode, two nozzles pass through each horizontal-scanning Rhine top fundamentally. For example, nozzle #85 and #40 of the 70th line pass in the early order of pass. The pixel contained in horizontal-scanning Rhine through which two nozzles pass is recorded by either of two nozzles which passes through the pixel top. [0030] On the other hand, three nozzles pass through horizontal-scanning Rhine, such as the 49th line, the 53rd line, the 57th line, the 61st line, the 65th line, and the 69th line. However, nozzle #91-#96 which are not used in the 2nd dot recording mode are contained in the nozzle which passes through these horizontal-scanning Rhine top. For this reason, each pixel contained in these horizontal-scanning Rhine is recorded by either of two nozzles other than nozzle #91-#96.

[0031] In the 2nd dot recording mode, the same record as the part of 49th line - the 93rd line enclosed with the thick frame in drawing 7 is repeated about the direction of arrow-head SS'. The magnitude of the unit part repeated about this direction of vertical scanning is 45 lines as well as 45 dots of feeds per revolution.

[0032] Drawing 8 is the explanatory view showing how horizontal-scanning Rhine on a print sheet is recorded in the 3rd dot recording mode. As shown in drawing 8, in the 2nd dot recording mode, vertical scanning in the feed per revolution of 43 dots is performed once for every one horizontal scanning. Moreover, nozzle #87-#96 are not used in the 3rd dot recording mode.

[0033] As shown in drawing 8, also in the 3rd dot recording mode, two nozzles pass through each horizontal-scanning Rhine top fundamentally. For example, nozzle #54 and #11 of the 130th line pass in the early order of pass. The pixel contained in horizontal-scanning Rhine through which two nozzles pass is recorded by either of two nozzles which passes through the pixel top. [0034] On the other hand, three nozzles pass through horizontal-scanning Rhine, such as the 90th line, the 94th line, and the 98th line. However, nozzle #87-#96 which are not used in the 3rd dot recording mode are contained in the nozzle which passes through these horizontal-scanning Rhine top. For this reason, the pixel contained in these horizontal-scanning Rhine is recorded by either of two nozzles other than nozzle #87-#96.

[0035] In the 3rd dot recording mode, the same record as the part of 90th line - the 132nd line enclosed with the thick frame in drawing 8 is repeated about the direction of arrow-head SS'. The magnitude of the unit part repeated about this direction of vertical scanning is 43 lines as well as 43 dots of feeds per revolution.

[0036] Each of the 1st to 3rd dot recording mode records the pixel of horizontal-scanning Rhine with two nozzles. And the 1st dot recording mode uses the nozzle of nozzle #1-#94, and prints by 47-dot delivery. The 2nd dot recording mode uses the nozzle of nozzle #1-#90, and prints by 45-dot delivery. The 3rd dot recording mode uses the nozzle of nozzle #1-#86, and prints by 43-dot delivery. Therefore, the feed per revolution of the 2nd dot recording mode is

$45/47 \times 100 = 95.7\%$ to the feed per revolution of the 1st dot recording mode. That is, the print speed of the 2nd dot recording mode is 95.7% to the print speed of the 1st dot recording mode. Moreover, the feed per revolution of the 3rd dot recording mode is $43/47 \times 100 = 91.5\%$ to the feed

per revolution of the 1st dot recording mode. That is, the print speed of the 3rd dot recording mode is 91.5% to the print speed of the 1st dot recording mode.

[0037] In the 1st example, the above feeds per revolution choose one dot recording mode from two or more almost equal dot recording modes. Here, I hear that the feed per revolution of a dot recording mode with the smallest feed per revolution is 80% or more of a feed per revolution of a dot recording mode with the largest feed per revolution with "a feed per revolution is almost equal", and it is. In the 1st example, in order that a feed per revolution may choose one dot recording mode from two or more almost equal dot recording modes, a print speed will choose one dot recording mode from two or more almost equal candidates' dot recording modes.

Therefore, even if it chooses which dot recording mode, it is not said very slow that a print speed becomes. For this reason, a user can choose the high dot recording mode of the quality of a printing result, without caring about a print speed. In addition, it is more desirable that the feed per revolution of a dot recording mode with the smallest feed per revolution is 90% or more of a feed per revolution of a dot recording mode with the largest feed per revolution.

[0038] Drawing 9 is the table showing with which pass each horizontal-scanning Rhine is recorded in the 1st to 3rd dot recording mode. Drawing 9 (a) corresponds to the 1st dot recording mode shown in drawing 6. And drawing 9 (b) corresponds to the 2nd dot recording mode shown in drawing 7, and drawing 9 (c) corresponds to the 3rd dot recording mode shown in drawing 8. The pass which records horizontal-scanning Rhine of the part which enclosed all with the thick frame in drawing 6 - drawing 8 is shown. However, he adds horizontal-scanning Rhine and is trying to become 47 lines in all about drawing 9 (b) and drawing 9 (c) for the comparison with drawing 9 (a). About drawing 9 (b) and drawing 9 (c), thick striping shows the boundary line of horizontal-scanning Rhine of the part enclosed with the thick frame in drawing 7 and drawing 8, and added horizontal-scanning Rhine. In addition, the line number shown in left-hand side in drawing 9 differs from the line number shown in drawing 6 - drawing 8. The line number shown in left-hand side in drawing 9 numbers Rhine of the upper limit of the field enclosed with a thick frame by considering as the 1st line by drawing 6 - drawing 8.

[0039] Also in which [the 1st - / 3rd] dot recording mode, since each horizontal-scanning Rhine is recorded with two pass, the pass number is expressed with the column of two trains per each horizontal-scanning Rhine at drawing 9 (a) - (c), the 1- enclosed with the thick frame by the 1st dot recording mode from drawing 9 (a) -- it turns out that the relative context of the pass which records even the 4th line, and the same relation are repeated about the direction of arrow-head SS'. the 2- which similarly was enclosed with the thick frame by the 2nd dot recording mode from drawing 9 (b) -- it turns out that the relative context of the pass which records even the 5th line, and the same relation are repeated about the direction of arrow-head SS'. the 1- enclosed with the thick frame by the 3rd dot recording mode from drawing 9 (c) -- it turns out that the relative context of the pass which records even the 4th line, and the same relation are repeated about the direction of arrow-head SS'.

[0040] drawing 9 (a) - (c) -- if the part enclosed with each thick frame is compared, it understands -- as -- the 1- in the 3rd dot recording mode, the contexts of the pass which records each horizontal-scanning Rhine which continues about the direction of vertical scanning differ mutually. for example, the 1st dot recording mode shows to drawing 9 (a) -- as -- the 2nd - the 5th pass -- setting -- the 4- the 1st line records above from the bottom -- having -- the 6th - the 9th pass -- setting -- the 4- the 1st line is recorded above from the bottom. on the other hand, the 2nd dot recording mode shows to drawing 9 (b) -- as -- the 2nd - the 5th pass -- setting -- the 2- the 5th line records below from a top -- having -- the 6th - the 9th pass -- setting -- the 2- the 5th line is recorded below from the top.

[0041] drawing 10 -- the 1- it is the explanatory view showing the quality of the printing result by the 3rd dot recording mode, the printing result shown in (a) - (c) of drawing 10 -- respectively -- the 1- it is as a result of [of the 3rd dot recording mode] printing. And it corresponds with the printing result of each dot recording mode shown in drawing 9 (a) - (c), respectively. Drawing 10 (a) The chart on the left of - (c) shows the nozzle number which records the pixel in the grid corresponding to each pixel. drawing 10 (a) - (c) shows -- as -- the 1- the combination of the nozzle on which horizontal-scanning Rhine where the 3rd dot

recording mode continues towards vertical scanning is recorded, respectively differs mutually. consequently, the 1-- the combination of the nozzle on which two or more pixels by which the 3rd dot recording mode continues towards vertical scanning are recorded, respectively differs mutually.

[0042] Generally, in the nozzle train allotted along the direction of vertical scanning (refer to drawing 4), the error of the formation location of the dot to a print sheet and the error of the amount of ink which carries out the regurgitation are as large as the nozzle of an edge. Among each nozzle of #1--96 within a row, for example, nozzle, train, nozzle #1--#20 near an edge it shall be in the inclination which forms a dot in a pixel rather than many other nozzles of the nozzle train central neighborhood in the location of top approach, and nozzle #77--#96 shall be in the inclination which forms a dot in a pixel rather than many other nozzles of the nozzle train central neighborhood in the location of bottom approach. Drawing 10 (a) Drawing on the right-hand side of - (c) shows the downward arrow head to the pixel which shows an upward arrow head to the pixel recorded by nozzle #1--#20, and is recorded on it by nozzle #77--#96.

[0043] Drawing 10 (a) In drawing on the right-hand side of - (c), when the arrow head of up-and-down Rhine faces each other, the dot formed in those Rhine may lap more greatly about direction SSof vertical scanning. Such a printing result of a part may be checked by looking as a color deeper than a normal condition. An arrow head AD shows such a part. The part shown by the arrow head AD may be checked by looking as a muscle in which the color extended to a main scanning direction is deep.

[0044] On the other hand, when the arrow head of up-and-down Rhine turns the back and suits, the dot formed in the Rhine may separate about direction SSof vertical scanning. Such a part A printing result is checked by looking as a color thinner than a normal condition, and is possible. An arrow head AL shows such a part. The part shown by the arrow head AL may be checked by looking as *** of the color of the ground of the muscle in which the color extended to a main scanning direction is thin, or a print sheet.

[0045] drawing on the right-hand side of drawing 10 (a) -- the 1st dot recording mode --- setting -- the 20-- in the 33rd line, it turns out that the part (arrow head AD) to which the color printed becomes deep, and the part (arrow head AL) which becomes thin are repeated by turns. On the other hand, by the 2nd dot recording mode shown in drawing 10 (b), only the part (arrow head AL) to which the color printed becomes thin is repeated at almost fixed spacing, and only the part (arrow head AD) to which the color printed becomes deep is repeated at almost fixed spacing at the 3rd dot recording mode shown in drawing 10 (c), thus, the 1-- the quality of a printing result may differ in the 3rd dot recording mode. In addition, it is determined by various factors, such as quality of paper of the manufacture error of a printer, or a print sheet, environmental temperature, humidity, and a property of the solvent of ink, whether the quality of printing by which dot recording mode becomes high.

[0046] Selection of a B3. dot recording mode: Drawing 11 is the explanatory view showing the test patch corresponding to the 1st dot recording mode. In case a dot recording mode is chosen, a user is step S2 of drawing 1 first, and prints the test patches Q1--Q3 on a print sheet by dot recording mode different, respectively. Specifically, a user issues printing directions of a test patch to a printer driver through the user interface screen of a computer 88. Then, a printer 20 prints a test patch. In addition, a user interface screen is displayed on display 88b by printer driver 88a performed within a computer 88. Moreover, printing of a test patch is performed by test patch formation section 41a (refer to drawing 3) of CPU41.

[0047] A test patch is printed using the ink of light cyanogen, a light Magenta, and three colors of Hierro. This test patch is checked by looking as a test patch of uniform gray in the state of ideal printing. In addition, the image data of this test patch of each can be supplied by the flexible disk, CD-ROM, etc. with a printer driver. Moreover, the image data of each test patch can be made into the mode stored in P-ROM43 (refer to drawing 3) of a printer 20 through a computer 88.

[0048] the 1-- which showed the dot recording mode by which a printer 20 forms a test patch on a print sheet to drawing 8 from drawing 6 -- it is each 3rd dot recording mode. First, a printer 20 is the 1st dot recording mode, and prints a test patch long in the direction of vertical scanning

as shown in drawing 11 on a print sheet. On a test patch, the number which shows each dot recording mode is printed. Since this test patch is long to direction SSof vertical scanning, it can express well the effect of the image quality by vertical scanning (refer to drawing 9 and drawing 10). Then, a user supplies again the print sheet with which the test patch Q1 was printed to a printer 20.

[0049] drawing 12 -- the 1-- it is the explanatory view showing the test patch corresponding to the 3rd dot recording mode. If the print sheet with which the test patch Q1 was printed is supplied to a printer 20, it will print the test patch Q2 by the 2nd dot recording mode on the right of the test patch Q1 on the print sheet. Furthermore, a user supplies again the print sheet with which the test patches Q1 and Q2 were printed to a printer 20, and a printer 20 prints the test patch Q3 by the 3rd dot recording mode on the right of the test patches Q1 and Q2. Thus, as shown in drawing 12, the test patches Q1, Q2, and Q3 are printed on a print sheet.

[0050] Drawing 13 is the explanatory view showing the user interface screen for inputting the selected number into a computer. In step S4 (refer to drawing 1), a user chooses the test patch which is visible to the most uniform gray out of the test patch printed by each dot recording mode. Then, at step S6, a user inputs into a computer the number given to the selected test patch through the user interface screen of a computer, as shown in drawing 12. A computer transmits the inputted number to a printer and a printer stores the number in P-ROM43 (refer to drawing 3). A printer can specify the dot recording mode chosen from two or more dot recording modes by the number stored in P-ROM43 based on the test patch. In addition, printer driver 88a in a computer 88 functions as the "input section" said to a claim by displaying a user interface screen on display 88b. That is, the "airline printer" said to a claim is a concept including a printer 20 and a computer 88. Moreover, the number which a user inputs into a computer 88 through a user interface screen is equivalent to the "dot recording-mode select data" said to a claim, and P-ROM43 is equivalent to the "dot recording-mode storage section."

[0051] A printer will process an image according to the dot recording mode corresponding to the number in P-ROM43, if printing directions are received later. According to the dot recording mode corresponding to the number in P-ROM43, a printer takes out the data for an one pass from a receive buffer 115, and, specifically, sends them to the expansion buffer 116 (refer to drawing 5). And from the data for an one pass in the expansion buffer 116, the data in which how to send vertical scanning of the dot recording mode corresponding to the number in P-ROM43 is shown will be taken out, and it will be sent to the horizontal-scanning section 111 and the vertical-scanning section 112.

[0052] Thus, in the example, in the printer which can perform two or more dot recording modes, the test patch corresponding to each dot recording mode is printed, and the dot recording mode used based on the printing result in the case of printing is chosen. For this reason, quality printing can be performed.

[0053] C. The 2nd example: the 1st example explained the example which chooses one dot recording mode from the dot recording mode which performs vertical scanning of the fixed feed per revolution of 47 dots, 45 dots, and 43 dots. Like the 1st example, delivery which always performs vertical scanning of a fixed feed per revolution is called "Sadanori delivery" in vertical scanning performed in the intervals of horizontal scanning. On the other hand, in vertical scanning performed in the intervals of horizontal scanning, delivery which repeats periodically vertical scanning of two or more kinds of feeds per revolution is called "irregular delivery." This invention is also applicable about the dot recording mode which performs irregular delivery. [0054] Drawing 14 is the explanatory view showing how horizontal-scanning Rhine on a print sheet is recorded in the 1st dot recording mode in the 2nd example. The printer of the 2nd example has eight nozzles about each color. And in the 1st dot recording mode, in the intervals of horizontal scanning, vertical scanning of 5 dots, 2 dots, 3 dots, and 6 dots is repeated, and is performed. Vertical scanning of these 5 dots, 2 dots, 3 dots, and 6 dots is equivalent to "unit vertical scanning" said to a claim. In printing by the 1st dot recording mode, the same record as the part enclosed with the thick frame in drawing 14 is repeated about the direction of arrow-höäd SS'.

[0055] Drawing 15 is the explanatory view showing how horizontal-scanning Rhine on a print

sheet is recorded in the 2nd dot recording mode in the 2nd example. To having repeated vertical scanning of 5 dots, 2 dots, 3 dots, and 6 dots, and having performed it in the intervals of horizontal scanning, by the 2nd dot recording mode, each vertical scanning performed in order of 5 dots, 6 dots, 3 dots, and 2 dots is repeated, and is performed at the 1st dot recording mode. In printing by the 2nd dot recording mode, the same record as the part enclosed with the thick frame in drawing 15 R> 5 is repeated about the direction of arrow-head SS'. In addition, both averages of the feed per revolution of vertical scanning in which unit vertical scanning contains the 1st dot recording mode and the 2nd dot recording mode are 4 dots.

[0056] The 3rd Rhine is recorded by nozzle #7 and #3 from on the part enclosed with the thick frame of drawing 14. And the 4th Rhine is recorded by nozzle #8 and #4 from the top. On the other hand, in drawing 15, the 3rd Rhine is recorded by nozzle #6 and #2 from the top, and the 4th Rhine is recorded from the top nozzle #7 and #3. Thus, the numbers of the nozzle which records horizontal-scanning Rhine where the 1st dot recording mode and the 2nd dot recording mode adjoin each other differ. Consequently, the combination of the nozzle on which two or more pixels which the 1st dot recording mode and the 2nd dot recording mode follow about direction SS' of vertical scanning are recorded, respectively differs mutually.

[0057] Moreover, the 8th Rhine is recorded from on the part enclosed with a thick frame by 3 pass eye and 7 pass eye by drawing 15 to being recorded by 7 pass eye and 11 pass eye at drawing 14. Thus, the pass which records each horizontal-scanning Rhine also differs by the 1st dot recording mode and the 2nd dot recording mode.

[0058] The number of the nozzle which records adjacent horizontal-scanning Rhine differs from the pass which records each horizontal-scanning Rhine by the 1st dot recording mode and the 2nd dot recording mode. For this reason, the quality of a printing result may differ. Thus, a patch as shown in drawing 12 can be formed by the dot recording mode from which the sequence of two or more vertical scanning which unit vertical scanning includes differs, and a dot recording mode with the quality of a printing result high also as a mode which chooses a dot recording mode can be chosen.

[0059] D. The 3rd example: there are various adjustments among the adjustments of a printer besides the adjustment performed by choosing one from the dot recording mode from which vertical scanning as shown in the 1st example and the 2nd example differs. The 3rd example explains the operation sequence of the adjustment performed by choosing one, and other adjustments from the dot recording mode from which vertical scanning as shown in the 1st example and the 2nd example differs.

[0060] The outward trip which moves at least one side of a nozzle group and print media in the 1st direction (for example, right in drawing 4). The return trip which moves at least one side of a nozzle group and print media in the 2nd direction (for example, left in drawing 4) where the 1st direction is reverse. When breathing out an ink droplet from a nozzle by ***** and forming a dot on a print sheet, it is desirable to define the adjustment value which the regurgitation timing of an ink droplet adjusts at least about one side of an outward trip and a return trip. It is because the ink droplet which are an outward trip and a return trip, and aimed at and breathed out the same location by adjustment of the regurgitation timing of this ink droplet can reach the actually same location.

[0061] Moreover, in printing which records two or more pixels contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine by horizontal scanning from which plurality differs, it is desirable to make record sequence of two or more pixels contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine into the record sequence that the quality of a printing result becomes high most. For example, as shown in drawing 6, in the 1st dot recording mode, each pixel contained in the 70th line is recorded by nozzle #88 or nozzle #41 with two pass. However, each horizontal-scanning Rhine can also be made into the mode recorded by three nozzle #a, #b, and #c with three pass. In that case, it is thought by whether it records in order of whether a continuous pixel is recorded in order of nozzle #a, #b, #c, #a, #b, and #c, nozzle #a, #c, #b, #a, #c, and #b that the quality of a printing result differs. Therefore, two or more pattern preparation of the record sequence of two or more pixels contained beforehand in one horizontal-scanning Rhine is carried out, and it is desirable to choose, from them the record sequence that the quality of a printing result becomes high most.

[0062] Drawing 16 is a flow chart which shows selection of vertical-scanning delivery, and the procedure of implementation of other adjustments. In the 3rd example, the adjustment value of the expulsion-of-an-ink-droplet timing in the above-mentioned outward trip and above-mentioned return trip of horizontal scanning is first defined at step S22. As a detailed procedure of step S22, it can be performed as follows, for example. That is, first, using two or more adjustment candidate values, in an outward trip and a return trip, a dot is formed on print media, and two or more 2nd test patches which reproduce an equal color mutually are formed on print media. And based on two or more 2nd test patches, an adjustment value is chosen from two or more adjustment candidate values.

[0063] After step S22, the record sequence of two or more pixels contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine is defined at step S24. As a detailed procedure of step S24, it can be performed as follows, for example. That is, the record sequence of two or more pixels contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine forms the 3rd test patch on print media by two or more 2nd mutually different dot recording modes first, respectively. And the 2nd dot recording mode is determined by choosing one test patch from the 3rd test patches.

[0064] After step S24, at step S26, as the 1st example and the 2nd example explained, one dot recording mode is chosen from the dot recording modes from which the pattern of vertical scanning differs, and vertical-scanning delivery is determined. In addition, at step S24, since the dot record sequence of the pixel in each horizontal-scanning Rhine is determined, by step S26, the record sequence of two or more pixels contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine will already choose one dot recording mode from two or more equal dot recording modes mutually.

[0065] By considering as such a mode, it can adjust efficiently and can set up for carrying out high printing of the quality of a printing result. That is, adjustment which can make small the dot formation location gap resulting from a mode like the 3rd example, then a different factor, respectively can be performed in order separately. And at step S26, the dot recording mode which performs vertical scanning to which the quality of a printing result becomes high most can be chosen from the candidates of the dot recording mode already optimized about the adjustment value of the dot formation location gap resulting from dot record in the outward trip and return trip of horizontal scanning, and the dot record sequence about a main scanning direction.

[0066] E. The modification: (1) 1st and 2nd examples explained printing which records one horizontal-scanning Rhine by two horizontal scanning. However, this invention can also apply one horizontal-scanning Rhine to other printings, such as printing recorded by 3 times or four horizontal scanning. Moreover, a dot recording mode can also be chosen from two or more dot recording modes from which the count of said horizontal scanning taken to record all the pixels contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine differs.

[0067] the printer by which drawing 17 has eight nozzles -- setting -- the law of 7 dots -- it is the explanatory view showing signs that it prints by the dot recording mode which performs rule delivery, the printer by which drawing 18 has eight nozzles -- setting -- the law of 3 dots -- it is the explanatory view showing signs that it prints by the dot recording mode which performs rule delivery. The count of said horizontal scanning taken for the dot recording mode of drawing 17 to record all the pixels contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine is 1 time. In addition, nozzle #8 are not used in the dot recording mode of drawing 17. Moreover, the count of said horizontal scanning taken for the dot recording mode of drawing 18 to record all the pixels contained in one horizontal-scanning Rhine is 2 times. And nozzle #7 and nozzle #8 are not used in the dot recording mode of drawing 18.

[0068] It is good also as choosing a dot recording mode on the occasion of selection of a dot recording mode from dot recording modes as shown in drawing 17 R> 7 and drawing 18. For example, a test patch is printed by the dot recording mode as shown in drawing 17 and drawing 18 in step S2 in the procedure of drawing 1, and the same procedure. And a dot recording mode is chosen by step S4, and the number of the dot recording mode is inputted into a computer at step S6. That is, two or more dot recording modes which print a test patch can be made into two or more dot recording modes from which the contents of vertical scanning performed in the intervals of horizontal scanning differ mutually.

[0069] (2) The 1st dot recording mode and the 2nd dot recording mode which were shown in the 2nd example suited the relation that the sequence of implementation of two or more vertical scanning which unit vertical scanning includes differed. However, this invention can also be made into the mode which chooses one dot recording mode from the dot recording mode which has a relation that the feeds per revolution of two or more vertical scanning which unit vertical scanning includes differ. That is, two or more dot recording modes which form a test patch are two or more dot recording modes which repeat and perform unit vertical scanning including vertical scanning of two or more kinds of feeds per revolution, and can be made into two or more dot recording modes from which at least the execution sequence of vertical scanning of two or more kinds of feeds per revolution which unit vertical scanning contains, and one side of two or more kinds of feeds per revolution and ** differ.

[0070] Moreover, the feed per revolution of an average of vertical scanning in which unit vertical scanning contains mutually two or more dot recording modes from which the feed per revolution of vertical scanning which unit vertical scanning includes differs does not need to be an equal. However, the dot recording mode which prints a test patch has the almost equal feed per revolution of each average — things — it is desirable. Here, I hear that the feed per revolution of a dot recording mode with the average smallest feed per revolution is 80% or more of a feed per revolution of a dot recording mode with the average largest feed per revolution with "an average feed per revolution is almost equal", and it is. Even if the difference of an average feed per revolution chooses choosing the dot recording mode to be used out of two or more small dot recording modes, then which dot recording mode, it is not said very slow that a print speed becomes. For this reason, a user can choose the high dot recording mode of the quality of a printing result, without caring about a print speed. In addition, it is more desirable that the feed per revolution of a dot recording mode with the average smallest feed per revolution is 90% or more of a feed per revolution of a dot recording mode with the average largest feed per revolution.

[0071] (3) In an example, although light cyanogen, a light Magenta, and the ink of Hierro performed printing of a test patch, the ink to be used is not restricted to this combination. For example, when the chromatic color ink used in color printing is a Magenta, cyanogen, and three colors of Hierro, a test patch can be printed using the ink of the three colors. In addition, in the printer which uses the ink of four colors, since a dot formation location gap influences the quality of a printing result greatly, especially the thing for which this invention is applied to the printer which uses the ink of four colors is desirable.

[0072] Furthermore, also when the chromatic color ink used in color printing is five colors of a dark Magenta, dark cyanogen, Hierro, a light Magenta, and light cyanogen, a test patch may be printed using the ink of not only three colors of Hierro, a light Magenta, and light cyanogen but other combination. That is, as long as it is ink which can identify the quality of the printing result of the patch formed by each dot recording mode, a patch may be formed in the ink of one color or two colors.

[0073] In addition, when forming a test patch by one color, it is desirable to form a dot so that a clearance may be made between the dots formed. For example, when forming the dot which spreads across the range of one pixel, it is desirable to prepare the pixel which does not record a dot among the pixels which record a dot on not all pixels but record a dot. Moreover, when recording a dot on all pixels, it is desirable to form a dot which does not cross the range of each pixel. By considering as such a mode, the test patch which is easy to find shade nonuniformity can be formed.

[0074] In addition, it is desirable to form a patch on the occasion of selection of a dot recording mode using the chromatic color ink of three colors, and, as for the three colors, it is still more desirable that they are three colors similar to cyanogen, a Magenta, three colors of Hierro, or each color. If a patch is formed in such a color and a dot recording mode is chosen, the quality of color printing can be raised.

[0075] (4) Further, in the example, although the nozzle group which carries out the regurgitation of the ink of a single color shall be a nozzle train which consists of a nozzle located in a line with seriate, arrangement of a nozzle is not restricted to this. That is, as long as it is the set of the

nozzle which carries out the regurgitation of the ink of a single color, what kind of thing may be used.

[0076] (5) In each above-mentioned example, although the ink jet printer was explained, this invention is applicable to the airline printer of not only an ink jet printer but the versatility which generally prints using the print head. Moreover, this invention is applicable not only to the approach of carrying out the regurgitation of the ink droplet, or equipment but the approach and equipment which record a dot with other means.

[0077] (6) Selection of the above-mentioned dot recording mode is good also as the user itself who uses an airline printer carrying out, and good also as choosing and setting up a dot recording mode in the production process of an airline printer.

[0078] (7) You may make it transpose a part of configuration of that hardware was realized to software, and may make it transpose a part of configuration of that software realized to hardware conversely in each above-mentioned example. For example, it is also possible to realize the function to send some data in the receive buffer 115 shown in drawing 5 to the expansion buffer 116, and the function which takes out some data in the expansion buffer 116 for the horizontal-scanning section 111 and the vertical-scanning section 112 by hardware. Moreover, it is good also as realizing those functions by printer driver 88a in a computer 88.

[Translation done.]

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1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
2. *** shows the word which can not be translated.
3. In the drawings, any words are not translated.

DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

- [Drawing 1] The flow chart which shows the procedure of determining a dot recording mode.
- [Drawing 2] The outline block diagram of the printing system equipped with the printer 20 of an example.
- [Drawing 3] The block diagram showing the configuration of the control circuit 40 in a printer 20.
- [Drawing 4] The explanatory view showing the nozzle of two or more trains prepared in the print head 28.
- [Drawing 5] The block diagram showing the function part in a control circuit 40.
- [Drawing 6] The explanatory view showing how horizontal-scanning Rhine on a print sheet is recorded in the 1st dot recording mode.
- [Drawing 7] The explanatory view showing how horizontal-scanning Rhine on a print sheet is recorded in the 2nd dot recording mode.
- [Drawing 8] The explanatory view showing how horizontal-scanning Rhine on a print sheet is recorded in the 3rd dot recording mode.
- [Drawing 9] The table showing with which pass each horizontal-scanning Rhine is recorded in the 1st to 3rd dot recording mode.
- [Drawing 10] The 1- the explanatory view showing the quality of the printing result in the 3rd dot recording mode.
- [Drawing 11] The explanatory view showing the test patch corresponding to the 1st dot recording mode.
- [Drawing 12] The 1- the explanatory view showing the test patch corresponding to the 3rd dot recording mode.
- [Drawing 13] The explanatory view showing the user interface screen for inputting the selected number into a computer.
- [Drawing 14] The explanatory view showing how horizontal-scanning Rhine on a print sheet is recorded in the 1st dot recording mode in the 2nd example.
- [Drawing 15] The explanatory view showing how horizontal-scanning Rhine on a print sheet is recorded in the 2nd dot recording mode in the 2nd example.
- [Drawing 16] The flow chart which shows selection of vertical-scanning delivery, and the procedure of implementation of other adjustments.
- [Drawing 17] the printer which has eight nozzles -- setting -- the law of 7 dots -- the explanatory view showing signs that it prints by the dot recording mode which performs rule delivery.
- [Drawing 18] the printer which has eight nozzles -- setting -- the law of 3 dots -- the explanatory view showing signs that it prints by the dot recording mode which performs rule delivery.
- [Description of Notations]
- 20 -- Ink jet printer
- 22 -- Paper feed motor
- 24 -- Carriage motor
- 26 -- Platen

28 -- Print head

30 -- Carriage

32 -- Control panel

34 -- Sliding shaft

36 -- Driving belt

38 -- Pulley

39 -- Position sensor

40 -- Control circuit

41 -- CPU

41a -- Test patch formation section

42 -- ROM

43 -- P-ROM

44 -- RAM

50 -- I/F specialized circuit

52 -- Head drive circuit

54 -- Motorised circuit

56 -- Connector

60 -- Print head unit

88 -- Computer

88a -- Printer driver

88b -- Display

111 -- Horizontal-scanning section

112 -- Vertical-scanning section

113 -- Head mechanical component

115 -- Receive buffer

116 -- Expansion buffer

117 -- Register

AD -- Arrow head which shows the part to which the lap of a dot is large

AL -- Arrow head which shows the part to which the lap of a dot is small

MS -- Arrow head which shows a main scanning direction

P -- Print sheet

PS -- Printing signal

Q1-Q3 -- Test patch

SS -- Arrow head which shows the feed direction of a print sheet

SS' -- Arrow head which shows the relative feed direction of the print head

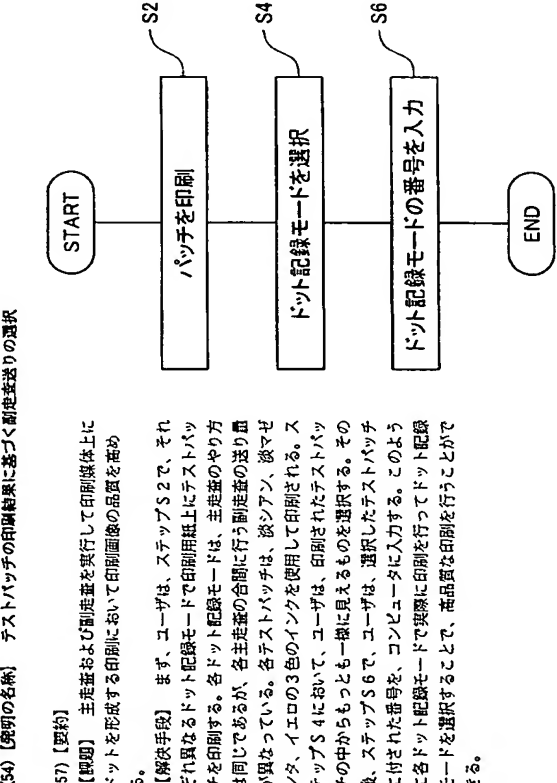
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う副走駆動部と、

外部からのデータ入力を受ける入力部と、
前記各部の制御を行う制御部と、を備え、
前記制御部は、

一つの主走ラインに含まれるすべての画像を記録する
に要する前記主走の回数が互いに等しく、かつ、前
記主走の合間に前記副走の内容が互いに異なる
複数のドット記録モードで、前記印刷媒体上にそれぞれ
テストパッチを形成するテストパッチ形成部と、
前記テストパッチに基づいて前記複数のドット記録モー
ドの中から選択されたドット記録モードを特定するこ
とができるデータであって、前記入力部から入力され
たドット記録モード選択データを記憶するドット記録モード
記憶部と、を備える。印刷装置。

【請求項11】 請求項10記載の印刷装置であって、
前記テストパッチ形成部は、前記副走の方向に連続す
る複数の画像がそれぞれ記録されるノズルの組み合せ
が互いに異なるドット記録モードで前記テストパッチを
形成する。印刷装置。

【請求項12】 請求項9または10に記載の印刷装置
であって、

前記テストパッチ形成部は、それぞれ1種類の送り量の
前記副走を繰り返し実行する複数のドット記録モード
であって、前記送り量が互いに異なる複数のドット記録
モードで前記テストパッチを形成する。印刷装置であって、

【請求項13】 請求項12記載の印刷装置であって、
前記テストパッチ形成部は、前記送り量がほぼ等しいド
ット記録モードで前記テストパッチを形成する。印刷装
置。

【請求項14】 請求項9または10に記載の印刷装置
であって、

前記テストパッチ形成部は、複数の種類の送り量の前記副
走を含む単位副走を繰り返し実行する複数のドット
記録モードであって、前記単位副走が含まれる前記複数の
種類の送り量の副走の実行順序と、前記複数の種類の送り
量と、の少なくとも一方が異なる複数のドット記録モー
ドで前記テストパッチを形成する。印刷装置。

【請求項15】 請求項14記載の印刷装置であって、
前記テストパッチ形成部は、前記単位副走を含む前記副
走の送り量の副走がほぼ等しいドット記録モードで前
記テストパッチを形成する。印刷装置。

【請求項16】 請求項9または10に記載の印刷装置
であって、

前記ノズル群は、
マゼンタインクを吐出するマゼンタノズル群と、
シアンインクを吐出するシアンノズル群と、
イエロインクを吐出するイエロノズル群と、を備え、

前記テストパッチ形成部は、前記各ドット記録モードに
おいて、前記マゼンタノズル群、前記シアンノズル群お
よび前記イエロノズル群を使用して、前記各テストパッ

チを形成する。印刷装置。

【請求項17】 インク滴を吐出するノズル群を備えた
印刷部を備えたコンピュータに、前記ノズル群と印刷媒
体との少なくとも一方を移動させる主走を行いつつ、
前記主走の合間に前記主走と交わる方向に前記ノズ
ル群と前記印刷媒体との少なくとも一方を移動させる副
走を行って、前記印刷媒体上にインク滴を着弾させて
ドットを形成することにより印刷を行う際、ドットの
ドットを形成するために用いるテストパッチを形成
させるための、コンピュータプログラムを記録したコン
ピュータ読み取り可能な記録媒体であって、
前記記録媒体は、

前記主走の合間に前記副走の内容が互いに異なる
複数のドット記録モードで、前記印刷媒体上にそれぞ
れテストパッチを形成する手順と、
前記テストパッチに基づいて前記複数のドット記録モー
ドの中から選択されたドット記録モードを表すドット記
録モード選択データを記憶する手順と、

前記コンピュータに実行させるためのプログラムを記
録したコンピュータ読み取り可能な記録媒体を備え、
【請求項18】 インク滴を吐出するノズル群と印刷部
を備えたコンピュータに、前記ノズル群と印刷媒
体との少なくとも一方を移動させる主走を行いつつ、
前記主走の合間に前記主走と交わる方向に前記ノズ
ル群と前記印刷媒体との少なくとも一方を移動させる副
走を行って、前記印刷媒体上にインク滴を着弾させて
ドットを形成することにより印刷を行う際、ドットの
ドットを形成するために用いるテストパッチを形成
させるための、コンピュータプログラムを記録したコン
ピュータ読み取り可能な記録媒体であって、
前記記録媒体は、

一つの主走ラインに含まれるすべての画像を記録する
に要する前記主走の回数が互いに等しく、かつ、前
記主走の合間に前記副走の内容が互いに異なる
複数のドット記録モードで、前記印刷媒体上にそれぞ
れテストパッチを形成する手順と、

前記テストパッチに基づいて前記複数のドット記録モー
ドの中から選択されたドット記録モードを表すドット記
録モード選択データを記憶する手順と、
前記コンピュータに実行させるためのプログラムを記
録したコンピュータ読み取り可能な記録媒体を備え、
【請求項19】 請求項17または18に記載の記録媒
体であって、さらに、
前記テストパッチを形成するための画像データを格納し
ている記録媒体。

【発明の詳細な説明】
【0001】
【発明の属する技術分野】この発明は、主走を行いつ
つ印刷媒体上にドットを形成することによって画像を印
刷する技術に関し、特に、主走の合間に副走を実行

する印刷において印刷画像の品質を高める技術に関す
る。

【0002】

【従来の技術】近年、コンピュータの出力装置として、
インクをヘッドから吐出するタイプのプリンタが広く普
及している。このようなプリンタの中には、主走を行
いつつノズルからインク滴を吐出させ、主走の合間に
副走を行って、印刷媒体上にドットを形成して画像を
印刷することがある。そのようなプリンタには、一定の
送り量の副走を繰り返し実行するものと、送り量の異な
る副走の組み合せを繰り返し実行するものとがあった。し
かし、いずれの場合も、副走の送り量の設定は、一つ
に固定されていた。

【0003】

【発明が解決しようとする課題】主走および副走を
実行して印刷媒体上にドットを形成する印刷におい
ては、プリンタの製造誤差や印刷用紙の質によっても、印
刷結果の品質が悪くなることがある。

【0004】この発明は、従来技術における上述の課題
を解決するためになされたものであり、主走および副
走を実行して印刷媒体上にドットを形成する印刷にお
いて印刷画像の品質を高めることを目的とする。

【0005】

【課題を解決するための手段およびその作用・効果】上
述の課題の少なくとも一部を解決するため、本発明で
は、ノズルからインク滴を吐出させ、印刷媒体上に着弾
させてドットを形成することにより印刷を行う印刷装置
において、所定の処理を行う。この印刷装置は、インク
滴を吐出するノズル群と、ノズル群と、印刷媒体と、の
少なくとも一方を移動させる主走を行う主走駆動部
と、ノズル群と、印刷媒体と、の少なくとも一方を主走
の方向と交わる方向に移動させる副走を行う副走
駆動部と、外部からのデータ入力を受ける入力部と、各
部の制御を行う制御部と、を備える。

【0006】そのような印刷装置において、主走の合
間に行う副走の内容が互いに異なる複数のドット記録
モードで、印刷媒体上にそれぞれテストパッチを形成す
る。その後、テストパッチの中から一つのテストパッチ
を選択することにより、ドット記録モードを決定する。
このように記録することによって、実際の印刷結果に基づ
いて、もっとも印刷画像の品質が高くなるドット記録モー
ドを選択することができる。

【0007】また、一つの主走ラインに含まれる複数の
の画像を複数の異なる主走で記録する印刷を行う場合
には、一つの主走ラインに含まれるすべての画像を記
録するのに要する主走の回数が互いに等しい複数のド
ット記録モードで、印刷媒体上にそれぞれテストパッチ
を形成することが好ましい。このような態様とすれば、
一つの主走ラインに含まれるすべての画像を記録する
のに要する主走の回数が互いに等しい複数のドット記

録モードの中から、一つの主走ラインに含まれる画像
の記録順序、および各画像を記録するノズルの組み合
わせの違いに起因する印刷結果の良否を基準として、ドッ
ト記録モードを選択することができる。

【0008】なお、複数のドット記録モードは、副走
の方向に連続する複数の画像がそれぞれ記録されるノズ
ルの組み合せが、互いに異なるドット記録モードであ
ることも好ましい。このような態様とすれば、印刷結果
の品質が異なるドット記録モードの中から、ドット記録
モードを選択することができる。

【0009】なお、テストパッチを形成する際には、そ
れぞれ1種類の送り量の副走を繰り返し実行する複数
のドット記録モードであって、送り量が互いに異なる複
数のドット記録モードで、印刷媒体上にそれぞれテスト
パッチを形成する態様とすることができる。また、その
場合には、送り量が互いに異なる複数のドット記録モー
ドは、送り量がほぼ等しいドット記録モードとすること
が好ましい。このような態様とすれば、どのドット記録
モードを選択しても、印刷速度が大きく変わるというこ
とがない。

【0010】また、テストパッチを形成する際には、複
数種類の送り量の副走を含む単位副走を繰り返し実行
する複数のドット記録モードであって、単位副走が
含む複数の種類の送り量の副走の実行順序と、複数の種
の送り量と、の少なくとも一方が異なる複数のドット記
録モードで、印刷媒体上にそれぞれテストパッチを形成
する態様とすることもできる。そのような場合には、単
位副走を繰り返し実行する複数のドット記録モード
は、単位副走が含む副走の送り量の平均値がほぼ等
しいドット記録モードとすることが好ましい。このよう
な態様とすれば、どのドット記録モードを選択しても、
印刷速度が大きく変わるということがない。

【0011】また、テストパッチを形成する際には、各
ドット記録モードにおいて、マゼンタ、シアンおよびイ
エロのインクでそれぞれドットを形成して、テストパッ
チを形成することが好ましい。このように記録とすれ
ば、カラー印刷における印刷結果の品質を向上しやす
いテストパッチを形成することができる。

【0012】なお、本発明は、以下に示すような種々の
態様で実現することが可能である。

- (1) ドット記録モード決定方法、印刷方法、印刷制御
方法。
- (2) 印刷装置、印刷制御装置。
- (3) 印刷装置の製造方法。
- (4) 上記の装置や方法を実現するためのコンピュータ
プログラム。
- (5) 上記の装置や方法を実現するためのコンピュータ
プログラムを記録した記録媒体。
- (6) 上記の装置や方法を実現するためのコンピュータ
プログラムを含有する搬送媒体内に具現化されたデータ信号。

【0013】
【発明の実施の形態】次に、本発明の実施の形態を実施例に基づいて以下の順序で説明する。

- A. 実施形態の概要：
B. 第1実施例：
B 1. 装置の構成：
B 2. ドット記録モード：
B 3. ドット記録モードの選択：
C. 第2実施例：
D. 第3実施例：
E. 変形例：

【0014】A. 実施形態の概要：図1は、ドット記録モードを決定する手順を示すフローチャートである。まず最初に、ユーザは、ステップS2で、それぞれ異なるドット記録モードで印刷紙上にテストパッチを印刷する。それぞれのドット記録モードは、主走査のやり方が同じであるが、各主走査の合間に行う副走査の送り量が異なる。ただし、送り量が最も小さいドット記録モードの送り量は、送り量が最も大きいドット記録モードの送り量の90%以上である。また、各テストパッチは、波シアン、波マゼンタ、イエロの3色のインクを使用して印刷される。このテストパッチは、理想的な印刷状態では一枚なグレーのテストパッチとして視認される。

【0015】ステップS4において、ユーザは、各ドット記録モードで印刷されたテストパッチの中からもっとも一枚なグレーに見えるテストパッチを選択する。その後、ステップS5で、ユーザは、選択したテストパッチに付された番号を、コンピュータのユーザーインターフェイス画面を通じてコンピュータに入力する。コンピュータは、その番号をプリンタに送る。プリンタは後に印刷指示を受けると、ステップS6で入力された番号に対応したドット記録モードにしたがって、画像を処理し、印刷を実行する。このように各ドット記録モードで実際に印刷を行ってドット記録モードを選択することで、商品量な印刷を行うことができる。

【0016】B. 第1実施例：
B 1. 装置の構成：図2は、本発明の実施例としてのインクジェットプリンタ20を備えた印刷システム2の概略構成図である。このプリンタ20は、紙送りモータ22によって印刷紙Pを副走査方向に搬送する副走査送り機構と、キャリッジモータ24によってキャリッジ30をプラテン26の軸方向（主走査方向）に往復動させる主走査送り機構と、キャリッジ30に搭載された印刷ヘッドユニット60を駆動してインクの吐出およびドット形成を制御するヘッド駆動機構と、これらの紙送りモータ22、キャリッジモータ24、印刷ヘッドユニット60および操作パネル32との番号のやり取りを用いる制御回路40とを備えている。制御回路40は、コネクタ56を介してコンピュータ8に接続されている。

aから転送された印刷用値P Sを1/F専用回路50が受け取り、それを受信バッファ115に一旦記憶する。そして、受信バッファ115に記憶されたデータから1パス分のデータが順次、展開バッファ116に送られ、

各主走査ラインが8回の主走査で記録される場合には、展開バッファ116に送られるデータは、各主走査ラインに含まれる画像8画に1個分のデータである。そして、展開バッファ116には、一度の主走査においてドットを記録される主走査ラインの分だけ、すなわち、一度の主走査において使用される全ノズルの分だけ、そのような各主走査ラインのドット形成情報のデータが送られる。

【0022】その後、展開バッファ116内のノズルの1パス分、すなわち主走査ライン1本分のドット形成情報から、各ノズルがドットを形成する際に、各ノズルの1画素分のドット形成情報がまとめて取り出されて、レジスタ117に送られる。レジスタ117では、その切り出されたデータをシリアルデータに変換してヘッド駆動回路52に送る。そして、ヘッド駆動回路52がそのシリアルデータに従ってヘッドを駆動して画像を印刷する。一方、展開バッファ116内の1パス分のデータからは、主走査の送り方を示すデータおよび副走査の送り方を示すデータが取り出され、主走査部111および副走査部112に送られる。そして、主走査部111および副走査部112が、それらのデータに従ってヘッドの主走査および印刷紙の搬送を行う。

【0023】B 2. ドット記録モード：図6は、第1のドット記録モードにおいて、印刷紙上の主走査ラインがどのように記録されるかを示す説明図である。図6においては、左側に主走査ラインの番号が示されている。また、図6の上側には、各主走査ラインを記録するためのバスの番号が示されている。そして、縦の列の升目で印刷ヘッドを示し、印刷ヘッドの各ノズルの位置を、それぞれのノズルの番号で示している。図6においては、説明を簡単にするために、各色のノズル列のうち、1列のみを示している。

【0024】図6に示すように、第1のドット記録モードでは、主走査一回ごとに47ドットの送り量で副走査が一回行われる。「1」ドットは副走査方向について各主走査ラインの間隔である。実際には、印刷紙Pが印刷ヘッドに対して搬送されて両者の相対位置が変わるが、図6では、説明を簡単にするために、印刷ヘッドが印刷紙Pに対して矢印SS'の方向に移動するかのようには表示している。なお、この矢印SS'は、図4における矢印SSとは逆の向きを示している。以降、矢印SSと矢印SS'は、ともに、図中において副走査方向を示すために使用する。また、図6では、説明を簡単にするために、副走査が一回行われるごとに印刷ヘッドを右にずらし表示している。なお、本明細書では、各主

走査ラインの記録を説明する際には、印刷紙Pが紙送りモータ22によって送られる際の前後の方向を「上方」と呼び、尾端の方向を「下方」と呼び、この上下の呼称は、図6の上下と一致している。

【0025】図6に示すように、第1のドット記録モードにおいては、基本的に各主走査ライン上に2個のノズルが通過する。例えば、第70ラインは、バスの早い順にノズル#88、#41が通過する。以下、ノズル番号には「#」を付すこととする。2個のノズルが通過する主走査ラインに含まれる各画素は、その画素上を通過する2個のノズルのいずれかによって記録される。

【0026】これに対して、第51ライン、第55ライン、第98ライン、第102ラインなどの主走査ラインは、3個のノズルが通過する。第51ラインと第98ラインは、バスの早い順にノズル#95、#48、#1が通過する。そして、第55ラインと第102ラインは、バスの早い順にノズル#96、#49、#2が通過する。第1のドット記録モードでは、ノズル#95、#96は使用しない。したがって、第1のドット記録モードにおいては、ノズル#95、#48、#1が通過する主走査ラインは、ノズル#48、#1で記録される。そして、ノズル#96、#49、#2が通過する主走査ラインは、ノズル#49、#2で記録される。

【0027】第1のドット記録モードにおいては、図6において太線で囲った第51ラインと第97ラインの部分と同様の記録が、矢印SS'の方向について繰り返される。例えば、第98ラインは、第51ラインと同様に記録され、第99ラインは、第52ラインと同様に記録される。この副走査方向について繰り返される単位部分の大きさは、送り量47ドットと同じく47ライン分である。

【0028】図7は、第2のドット記録モードにおいて、印刷紙上の主走査ラインがどのように記録されるかを示す説明図である。図7に示すように、第2のドット記録モードでは、主走査一回ごとに45ドットの送り量で副走査が一回行われる。また、第2のドット記録モードにおいては、ノズル#91～#96は使用されない。

【0029】図7に示すように、第2のドット記録モードにおいても、基本的に各主走査ライン上に2個のノズルが通過する。例えば、第70ラインは、バスの早い順にノズル#85、#40が通過する。2個のノズルが通過する主走査ラインに含まれる画素は、その画素上を通過する2個のノズルのいずれかによって記録される。

【0030】これに対して、第49ライン、第53ライン、第57ライン、第61ライン、第65ライン、第99ラインなどの主走査ラインは、3個のノズルが通過する。しかし、これらの主走査ライン上を通過するノズルには、第2のドット記録モードにおいて使用しないノズル#91～#96が含まれている。このため、これらの

【0021】制御回路40では、プリンタドライバ88

うな副走査方向に亘りテストパッチを印刷用紙上に印刷する。テストパッチの上には、各ドット記録モードを示す番号が印刷される。このテストパッチは副走査方向S'に亘り、図9、図10参照）。その後、ユーザは、テストパッチQ1が印刷された印刷用紙を再びプリンタ20に供給する。

【0049】図12は、第1〜第3のドット記録モードに対応したテストパッチQ1が印刷された印刷用紙を供給されると、その印刷用紙上のテストパッチQ1の右端に、第2のドット記録モードでテストパッチQ2を印刷する。さらに、ユーザは、テストパッチQ1、Q2が印刷された印刷用紙を再びプリンタ20に供給し、プリンタ20は、テストパッチQ1、Q2の右端に、第3のドット記録モードでテストパッチQ3を印刷する。このようにして、図12に示すように、印刷用紙上にテストパッチQ1、Q2、Q3が印刷される。

【0050】図13は、選択した番号をコンピュータに入力するためのユーザインターフェイス画面を示す説明図である。ステップS4（図1参照）において、ユーザは、各ドット記録モードで印刷されたテストパッチの中から最も一様なグレーに見えるテストパッチを選択する。その後、ステップS6で、ユーザは、図12に示すように、選択したテストパッチに付された番号を、コンピュータのユーザインターフェイス画面を通じてコンピュータに入力する。コンピュータは、入力された番号をプリンタに転送し、プリンタはその番号をP-R-OM 43（図3参照）内に格納する。プリンタは、P-R-OM 43内に格納された番号によって、テストパッチD'中最近い複数のドット記録モードの中から選択されたドット記録モードを特定することができる。なお、コンピュータ88内のプリンタドライバ88aが、ディスプレイ88bにユーザインターフェイス画面を表示することによって、特許請求の範囲にいう「入力部」として機能する。すなわち、特許請求の範囲にいう「印刷装置」は、プリンタ20とコンピュータ88を含めた概念である。また、ユーザがユーザインターフェイス画面を通じてコンピュータ88に入力する番号が、特許請求の範囲にいう「ドット記録モード選択データ」に相当し、P-R-OM 43が、「ドット記録モード記憶部」に相当する。

【0051】プリンタは、後に印刷指示を受けると、P-R-OM 43内の番号に対応したドット記録モードにしたがって、画像を処理する。具体的には、プリンタP-R-OM 43内の番号に対応したドット記録モードにしたがって、受信バッファ115から1パス分のデータを取出して、展開バッファ116に送る（図5参照）。そして、展開バッファ116内の1パス分のデータからは、P-R-OM 43内の番号に対応したドット記

録モードの副走査の送り方を示すデータが取り出され、主走査部111および副走査部112に送られることになる。

【0052】このように、実施例では、複数のドット記録モードを実行可能なプリンタにおいて、各ドット記録モードに対応したテストパッチを印刷し、その印刷結果に基づいて印刷の際に使用するドット記録モードを選択する。このため、高品質な印刷を実行することができる。

【0053】C. 第2実施例：第1実施例では、47ドット、45ドット、43ドットの一定の送りの副走査を行うドット記録モードから一つのドット記録モードを選択する例について説明した。第1実施例のように、主走査の合間に1行の副走査において、常に一定の送りの副走査を行う送りを「定期送り」という。これに対して、主走査の合間に行う副走査において、複数の送りの副走査を周期的に繰り返すような送りを「変則送り」という。本発明は、変則送りを行うドット記録モードについて適用することもできる。

【0054】図14は、第2実施例における第1のドット記録モードにおいて、印刷用紙上の主走査ラインごとにように記録されるかを示す説明図である。第2実施例のプリンタは、各色について8個のノズルを有している。そして、第1のドット記録モードでは、主走査の合間に5ドット、2ドット、3ドット、6ドットの副走査を繰り返す。この5ドット、2ドット、3ドット、6ドットの副走査が、特許請求の範囲にいう「単位副走査」に相当する。第1のドット記録モードによる印刷では、図14において太線で囲った部分と同様の記録が、矢印S'の方向について繰り返される。

【0055】図15は、第2実施例における第2のドット記録モードにおいて、印刷用紙上の主走査ラインごとにように記録されるかを示す説明図である。第1のドット記録モードでは、主走査の合間に5ドット、2ドット、3ドット、6ドットの副走査を繰り返す行ったのに対して、第2のドット記録モードでは、5ドット、6ドット、3ドット、2ドットの順で行う各副走査を繰り返す。第2のドット記録モードによる印刷では、図15において太線で囲った部分と同様の記録が、矢印S'の方向について繰り返される。なお、第1のドット記録モードと第2のドット記録モードとは、単位副走査が含む副走査の送りの平均は、ともに4ドットである。

【0056】図14の太線で囲った部分の上から3番目のラインは、ノズル#7、#3で記録されている。そして上から4番目のラインは、ノズル#8、#4で記録されている。これに対して、図15では、上から3番目のラインはノズル#6、#2で記録されており、上から4番目のラインはノズル#7、#3で記録されている。このように、第1のドット記録モードと第2のドット記録

ードは、隣り合う主走査ラインを記録するノズルの番号が異なる。その結果、第1のドット記録モードと、第2のドット記録モードは、副走査の方向S'について逆接する複数の画面の画面の記録順序を複数パターン用意しておき、その中から一つも印刷結果の品質が高くなる記録順序を選択することが好ましい。

【0057】また、太線で囲った部分の上から8番目のラインは、図14では7パス目と11パス目で記録されているのに対し、図15では3パス目と7パス目で記録されている。このように、第1のドット記録モードと第2のドット記録モードでは、各主走査ラインを記録するパスも異なる。

【0058】第1のドット記録モードと、第2のドット記録モードとは、隣り合う主走査ラインを記録するノズルの番号、および各主走査ラインを記録するパスが異なる。このため、印刷結果の品質が異なっている可能性がある。このように、単位副走査が含む複数の副走査の順番が異なるドット記録モードで、図12に示すようなパッチを形成し、ドット記録モードを選択する態様としても、印刷結果の品質の高いドット記録モードを選択することができる。

【0059】D. 第3実施例：プリンタの調整には、第1実施例および第2実施例で示したような副走査が異なるドット記録モードから一つを選択して行う調整のほか、様々な調整がある。第3実施例では、第1実施例および第2実施例で示したような副走査が異なるドット記録モードから一つを選択して行う調整と、他の調整との実施順序について説明する。

【0060】ノズル群と印刷媒体との少なくとも一方を第1の方向（例えば図4における右方向）に移動させる。第1の方向と印刷媒体との少なくとも一方を第1の方向とは逆の第2の方向（例えば図4における左方向）に移動させる。第2の方向でノズルからインク滴を吐出して、印刷用紙上にドットを形成するため、ステップS24で、一つの主走査ラインに含まれる複数の画面のドット記録順序は決定されているため、ステップS26では、一つの主走査ラインに含まれる複数の画面のドット記録順序が互いに等しい複数のドット記録モードの中から、一つのドット記録モードを選択することになる。

【0061】また、一つの主走査ラインに含まれる複数の画面を複数の異なる主走査で記録する印刷において、一つの主走査ラインに含まれる複数の画面の記録順序を、もともと印刷結果の品質が高くなる記録順序とすることを好ましい。例えば、図6に示すように、第1のドット記録モードにおいて、第70ラインに含まれる各画面は、2回のパスでノズル#8からノズル#41のいずれかで記録される。しかし、各主走査ラインを、3回のパスで3個のノズル#a、#b、#cで記録する態様とすることもできる。その場合、連続する画面をノズル#a、#b、#c、#a、#b、#cの順で記録する

か、ノズル#a、#c、#b、#a、#c、#bの順で記録するかによって、印刷結果の品質が異なってくる。したがって、あらかじめ一つの主走査ラインに含まれる複数の画面の記録順序を複数パターン用意しておき、その中から一つも印刷結果の品質が高くなる記録順序を選択することが好ましい。

【0062】図16は、副走査送りの選択と、他の調整の実施の手順を示すフローチャートである。第3実施例では、まず、ステップS22で、前述の主走査の往路と復路におけるインク滴吐出タイミングの調整を定める。ステップS22の詳細な手順としては、例えば、次のようにすることができ。すなわち、まず、複数の調整候補値を用い、往路と復路において印刷媒体上にドットを形成して、互いに等しい色を再現する複数の第2のテストパッチを印刷媒体上に形成する。そして、複数の第2のテストパッチに基づいて、複数の調整候補値の中から調整値を選択する。

【0063】ステップS22の後に、ステップS24で、一つの主走査ラインに含まれる複数の画面の記録順序を定める。ステップS24の詳細な手順としては、例えば、次のようにすることができ。すなわち、まず、一つの主走査ラインに含まれる複数の画面の記録順序が互いに異なる複数の第2のドット記録モードで、印刷媒体上にそれぞれ第3のテストパッチを形成する。そして、第3のテストパッチの中から一つのテストパッチを選択することにより、第2のドット記録モードを決定する。

【0064】ステップS24の後に、ステップS26で、第1実施例や第2実施例で説明したようにして、副走査のパターンが異なるドット記録モードの中から一つのドット記録モードを選択して、副走査送りを実行する。なお、既にステップS24で、各主走査ライン中の画面のドット記録順序は決定されているため、ステップS26では、一つの主走査ラインに含まれる複数の画面の記録順序が互いに等しい複数のドット記録モードの中から、一つのドット記録モードを選択することになる。

【0065】このような態様とすることで、効率的に調整を行って、印刷結果の品質の高い印刷をするための態様とすることができる。すなわち、第3実施例のような態様とすれば、異なる要因に起因するドット形成位置ずれをそれぞれ小さくできる調整を、別々に、順に行うことができる。そして、ステップS26では、主走査の往路と復路でのドット記録に起因するドット形成位置ずれの調整値、および主走査方向についてのドット記録順序について、すでに最適化されているドット記録モードの候補の中から、最も印刷結果の品質が高くなる副走査を行うドット記録モードを選択することができる。

【0066】E. 変形例：

(1) 第1および第2実施例では、一つの主走査ラインを2回の主走査で記録する印刷について説明した。しか

のユーザインターフェイス画面を示す説明図。
【図14】第2実施例における第1のドット記録モードにおいて、印刷用紙上の主走査ラインがどのように記録されるかを示す説明図。
【図15】第2実施例における第2のドット記録モードにおいて、印刷用紙上の主走査ラインがどのように記録されるかを示す説明図。

するノズルの場合であればどのようなものでもよい。
【0076】(5)上記各実施例では、インクジェットプリンタについて説明したが、本発明はインクジェットプリンタに限らず、一般に、印刷ヘッドを用いて印刷を行う種々の印刷装置に適用可能である。また、本発明は、インク滴を吐出する方法や装置に限らず、他の手段でドットを記録する方法や装置にも適用可能である。

【0077】(6)上記のドット記録モードの選択は、印刷装置の製造工程において行うこととしてもよいし、装置の製造工程において行うドット記録モードを選択し、設定することとしてもよい。

【0078】(7)上記各実施例において、ハードウェアによって実現されていた構成の一部をソフトウェアに置き換えるようにしてもよく、逆に、ソフトウェアによって実現されていた構成の一部をハードウェアに置き換えるようにしてもよい。例えば、図5に示した受信バッファ115内のデータの一部を展開バッファ116へ送る機能や、展開バッファ116内のデータの一部を主走査部111および副走査部112のために取り出す機能は、ハードウェアによって実現することも可能である。また、それらの機能をコンピュータ88内のプリンタドライバ88aで実現することとしてもよい。

【図面の簡単な説明】
【図1】ドット記録モードを決定する手順を示すフローチャート。
【図2】実施例のプリンタ20を備えた印刷システムの概略構成図。
【図3】プリンタ20における制御回路40の構成を示すブロック図。
【図4】印刷ヘッド28に設けられた複数列のノズルを示す説明図。
【図5】制御回路40内の機能部を示すブロック図。
【図6】第1のドット記録モードにおいて、印刷用紙上の主走査ラインがどのように記録されるかを示す説明図。
【図7】第2のドット記録モードにおいて、印刷用紙上の主走査ラインがどのように記録されるかを示す説明図。
【図8】第3のドット記録モードにおいて、印刷用紙上の主走査ラインがどのように記録されるかを示す説明図。
【図9】第1から第3のドット記録モードにおいて、各主走査ラインがどのように記録されるかを示す図。
【図10】第1〜第3のドット記録モードにおける印刷結果の品質を示す説明図。
【図11】第1のドット記録モードに対応するテストパッチを示す説明図。
【図12】第1〜第3のドット記録モードに対応したテストパッチを示す説明図。
【図13】選択した番号をコンピュータに入力するため、A L…ドットの重なりが小さくなっていく部分を示す矢印

10 20 30 40 50

均の送り量が最も大きいドット記録モードの送り量の80%以上であることである。平均の送り量の差が小さい複数のドット記録モードの中から、使用するドット記録モードを選択することとすれば、どのドット記録モードを選択しても、印刷速度が非常に速くなるということができる。このため、ユーザは、印刷速度を気にすることなく印刷結果の品質の高いドット記録モードを選択することができる。なお、平均の送り量が最も小さいドット記録モードの送り量が、平均の送り量が最も大きいドット記録モードの送り量の90%以上であることがよい。好ましい。

【0071】(3)実施例においては、テストパッチの印刷は、淡シアンと淡マゼンタとイエロのインクで行ったが、使用するインクはこの組み合わせに限られるものではない。例えば、カラー印刷において使用する有彩色インクが、マゼンタ、シアン、イエロの3色である場合は、その3色のインクを使用してテストパッチの印刷を行うことができる。なお、4色のインクを使用するプリンタにおいては、ドット形成位置が印刷結果の品質に大きく影響するため、4色のインクを使用するプリンタに本発明を適用することは特に好ましい。

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し、本発明は、一つの主走査ラインを3回や4回の主走査で記録する印刷など、他の印刷に適用することでもできる。また、一つの主走査ラインに含まれるすべての画素を記録するのに要する前記主走査の回数が異なる複数のドット記録モードから、ドット記録モードを選択することもできる。

【0067】図17は、8個のノズルを有するプリンタにおいて、7ドットの定期送りを行うドット記録モードで印刷を行う様子を示す説明図である。図18は、8個のノズルを有するプリンタにおいて、3ドットの定期送りを行うドット記録モードで印刷を行う様子を示す説明図である。図17のドット記録モードは、一つの主走査ラインに含まれるすべての画素を記録するのに要する前記主走査の回数は、1回である。なお、図17のドット記録モードにおいては、ノズル#8は使用されない。また、図18のドット記録モードは、一つの主走査ラインに含まれるすべての画素を記録するのに要する前記主走査の回数は、2回である。そして、図18のドット記録モードにおいては、ノズル#7およびノズル#8は使用されない。

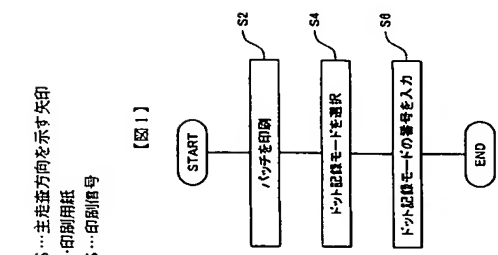
【0068】ドット記録モードの選択に際しては、図17と図18に示したようなドット記録モードの中からドット記録モードを選択することとしてもよい。たとえば、図1の手順と同様の手順で、ステップS2において、図17と図18に示したようなドット記録モードでテストパッチを印刷する。そして、ステップS4でドット記録モードを選択し、ステップS6でそのドット記録モードの番号をコンピュータに入力する。すなわち、テストパッチを印刷する複数のドット記録モードは、主走査の回数に行う副走査の内容が互いに異なる複数のドット記録モードとすることができる。

【0069】(2)第2実施例で示した第1のドット記録モードと第2のドット記録モードとは、単位副走査を含む複数の副走査の実施の順番が異なるという関係にある。しかし、本発明は、単位副走査を含む複数の副走査の送り量が異なるという関係にあるドット記録モードから、一つのドット記録モードを選択する態様とすることもできる。すなわち、テストパッチを形成する複数のドット記録モードは、複数の副走査の送り量の副走査を含むドット記録モードは、単位副走査を含む副走査を含む副走査の平均の送り量が等しいものである必要はない。ただし、テストパッチを印刷するドット記録モードは、それぞれの平均の送り量がほぼ等しいことと好ましい。ここで、「平均の送り量がほぼ等しい」とは、平均の送り量が最も小さいドット記録モードの送り量が、平均

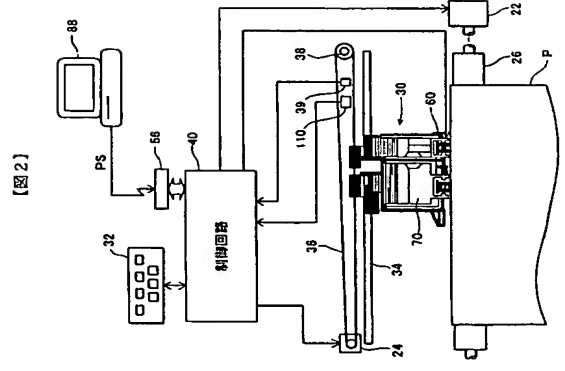
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印
M S...主走査方向を示す矢印
P...印刷用紙
P S...印刷番号

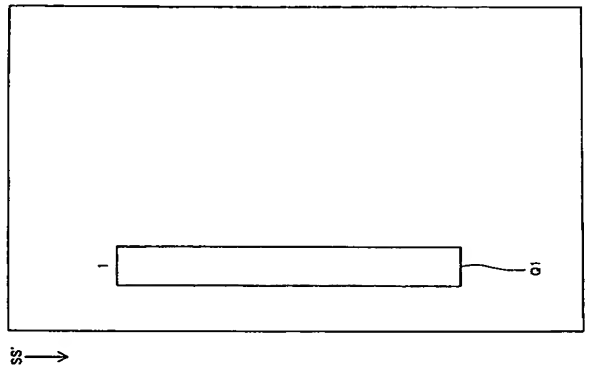
Q 1~Q 3...テストパッチ
S S...印刷用紙の送り方向を示す矢印
S S'...印刷ヘッドの相対的な送り方向を示す矢印



【図2】



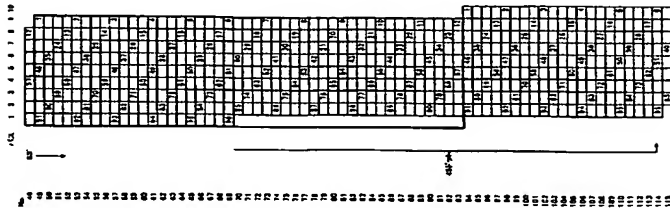
【図11】



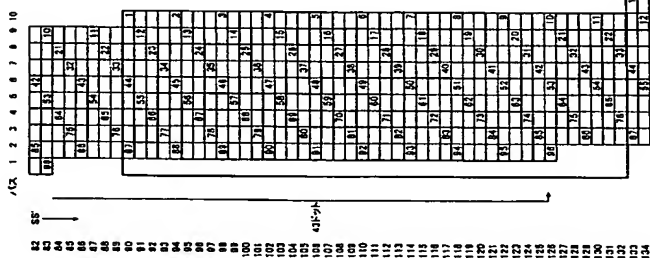
【図6】

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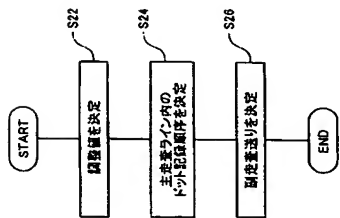
【図7】



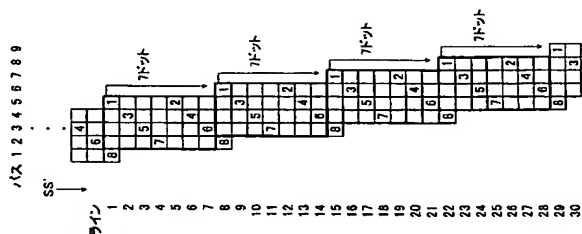
【図8】



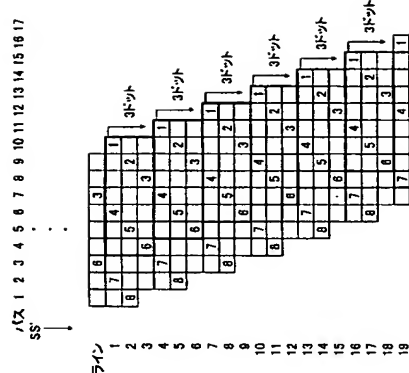
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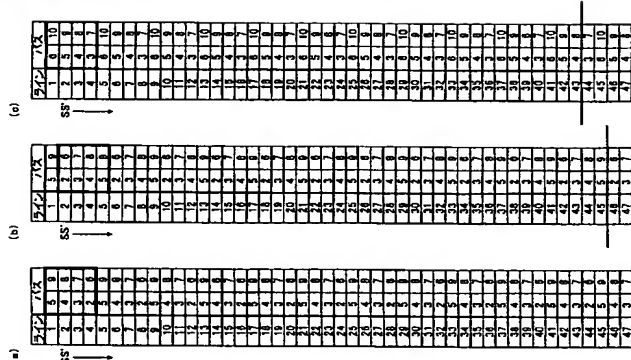
【図17】



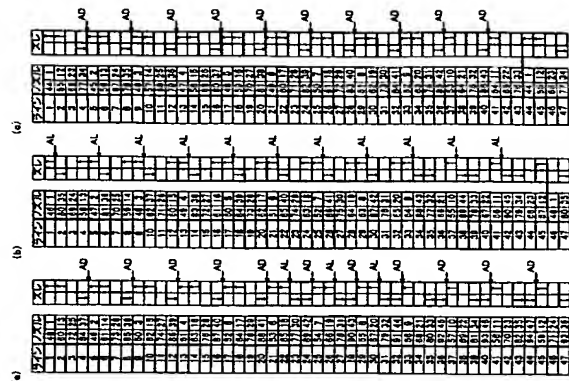
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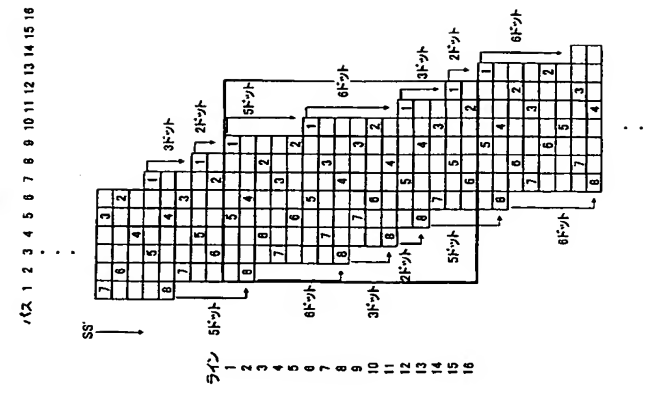
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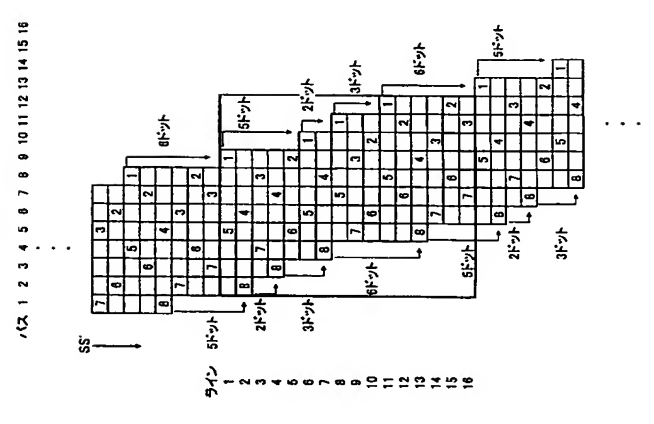
【図10】



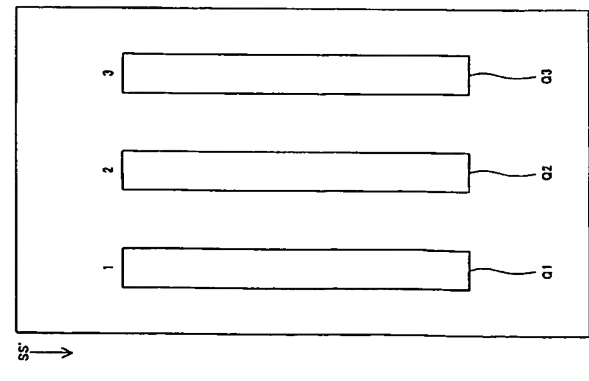
【図15】



【図14】



【図12】



フロントページの続き

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EC80 FA10
2C061 A005 KK16 KK19 KK26 KK35